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C O N F I D E N T I A L MAPUTO 000128

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KMCA](#) [MCC](#) [SNAR](#) [EAID](#) [MZ](#)
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT THANKS AMBASSADOR FOR USG SUPPORT

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Todd Chapman for reasons 1.4 (b+d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: On February 10 Ambassador Rowe presented her credentials to the GRM at a formal ceremony at the Presidency hosted by President Guebuza. During the brief but substantive discussion which followed, Guebuza described the GRM's relationship with the USG as "excellent," expressing particular appreciation for the MCC, the ongoing visit of the two USN ships and the maritime security and officer training provided by the U.S. military. For the first time ever, he specifically identified narcotrafficking as a problem in Mozambique, stating that he looked forward to working with the USG to address this growing challenge, and conveyed via the Ambassador his best wishes to President Obama. END SUMMARY.

MILITARY, MCC LAUDED, NARCOTRAFFICKING A CONCERN

¶2. (C) During a formal, fifteen-minute ceremony at the Presidency, Ambassador presented her credentials to President Guebuza. Guebuza used the ten-minute discussion which followed to praise relations between the GRM and USG and to express his appreciation for USG support. After acknowledging the current visit to Maputo of the USS Nicholas and HSV-2 Swift, he extolled MCC efforts to improve infrastructure and U.S. military support and training. He noted the increasing threat posed by Somali piracy to his nation's maritime security. Significantly, he noted for the first time that narcotrafficking was a growing concern in Mozambique and said that he looked forward to working with the USG to combat the problem(NOTE: Visiting Africa Partnership Station- East (APS-E)Commodore Tranoris mentioned narcotrafficking as one of the negative consequences of weak maritime domain security in his comments to the press the previous day. END NOTE).

A CORDIAL FIRST ENCOUNTER

¶3. (SBU) The Ambassador confirmed USG commitment and continued support. She noted that President Obama often refers to African leaders as "partners" and that she fully expected to continue the U.S. policy of providing appropriate support in the spirit of partnership. President Guebuza asked the Ambassador to convey his best wishes to President Obama, which she agreed to do. Closing the discussion, President Guebuza requested an opportunity to meet again for broader discussions, to which the Ambassador readily agreed. Guebuza's request confirmed a similar overture made by the Foreign Minister the previous day.

COMMENT: SURPRISINGLY SUBSTANTIVE START

¶4. (C) President Guebuza rarely uses protocol events for policy discussion with foreign diplomats. As such it is significant that--without prompting--he raised a number of important bilateral issues, including narcotrafficking, which he has never mentioned previously in any discussion with USG interlocutors. While it is still too early to make any value judgments of how the incoming GRM administration will approach the USG relationship, it is possible that as Guebuza settles into his second term, he and his ministers may be willing to engage the USG more substantively than in the past on issues of importance to the USG.

ROWE